

September 18, 2021

Att: NYC Department of Education

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to declare that I would like to request religious exemption from receiving Covid vaccination.

I, Ageliki Heliotis, am an elementary school teacher at P.S. 143Q The Louis Armstrong School in Corona, NY. I have been a New York City DOE teacher for over 21 years and look forward to many more years with my students. It has been one of the greatest joys of my life to learn from and teach my students.

My religion is extremely important to me and is an integral part of my life. I was raised in an extremely faithful household and try to live by and instill the same beliefs and values in my own household. I regularly attend services, participate in the holy sacraments, go on religious pilgrimages, and continuously listen to and study many homilies about my faith. Prayer, study, and fasting are constants in my life and bring me closer to God. It has been through this prayer, study, and meditation that I have come to the conclusion that receiving the Covid vaccination violates by beliefs and faith.

I have always been a firm believer that we should keep our body pure and healthy, because it is the vessel of the Holy Spirit. It is not until recently that I have learned about how vaccines are tested and created. My religion protects freedom of choice, particularly when it comes to matters of personal health, and especially with regards to treating the body as a vessel of the Holy Spirit. It has been reported that "Pfizer and Moderna did perform confirmation tests (to ensure the vaccines work) using fetal cell lines. And Johnson & Johnson uses fetal cell lines in vaccine development, confirmation and production." (<https://www.nebraskamed.com/COVID/you-asked-we-answered-do-the-covid-19-vaccines-contain-aborted-fetal-cells>).

I made a conscious personal choice not to take this injection for reasons of personal religious conviction, which might differ from that of others, but it is still sacred and valued for me. Institutionalized religious beliefs might come in contrast with personal spiritual convictions over the course of history and it

is my sincere belief that the body is the vessel of the Holy Spirit. According to my faith, I chose not to be subjected to such medical and spiritual risks.

The development of each of the three current COVID-19 vaccines currently in use involved aborted fetal tissue or human embryonic stem cell derivation lines:

Johnson & Johnson/Janssen: The J&J Vaccine has publicly admitted to using a cell line called PER.C6. This is published on the Janssen website [\[1\]](#). This information is enumerated by the Lozier Institute [\[2\]](#). Fetal cell cultures are used to produce and test the vaccine; the final formulation of this vaccine includes residual amounts of the fetal host cell proteins (≤ 0.15 mcg) and/or host cell DNA (≤ 3 ng).

Pfizer/BioNTech: The Pfizer Vaccine was protein tested using the abortion-derived cell line HEK-293. The HEK-293 abortion-related cell line was used in research related to the development of each one of the 4 mainstream vaccines. This information is enumerated by the Lozier Institute [\[2\]](#). This information is recorded by the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory [\[3\]](#).

Moderna - The Moderna Vaccine was protein tested using the abortion-derived cell line HEK-293. This information is enumerated by the Lozier Institute [\[2\]](#). This information is cited by the vaccine researchers Kizzmekia S. Corbett, Darin K. Edwards, and Sarah R. Leist [\[4\]](#).

I believe it to be definitely inadmissible to use the methods of so-called fetal therapy, in which the human fetus on various stages of its development is aborted and used in attempts to treat various diseases and to rejuvenate an organism. It is my religious belief that abortion is a cardinal sin, I cannot find any justification for it either even if someone may possibly benefit from the destruction of a conceived human life. Contributing inevitably to ever wider spread and commercialization of abortion, this practice (even if its still hypothetical effectiveness could be proved scientifically) presents an example of glaring immorality and is criminal. The vaccines mentioned above are the product of testing on cells harvested from aborted fetuses. According to my religious traditional Orthodox moral theology certain actions are objectively, intrinsically evil under any circumstances. One of the most notable ones is *abortion*.

Abortion is considered murder in my faith and I cannot participate in the murder of innocent unborn babies. The Bible states:

Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder.

Psalms 139:13-16 "13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.

"Proverbs 6:16-17 "16 There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: 17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood"

Job 31:15 "15 Did not he who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers?"

I believe in the Old and New Testament and that God creates babies in the womb. God has a purpose for every single life that is created at conception. Aborting a baby in the womb is murder.

My religion declares that from a Christian point of view, death has two acceptances. The first is man's moving away from God through sin which is death that can be temporary or eternal, according to the seriousness of the sin, repentance or its absence. The second is physical death which is materialized through the separation of the soul from the body. All Christian effort is to get rid of the eternal death through the dynamic communion with God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit. This fact does not exclude the care for the conditions, moment and way of separating the soul from the body.

I am of the opinion that receiving the vaccines mentioned above would be participating in the sin of abortion, thereby resulting in my spiritual death. While neither death is desirable, the Church has since antiquity declared that spiritual death is magnitudes less desirable than physical death because spiritual death results in the eternal suffering of our souls, as is declared in Revelation 21:8 - "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." And again in Revelation 20:14 - "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

Receiving these vaccines is a contradiction to my faith even if the said vaccines genuinely benefited me. It would be a violation of my own moral code to receive this vaccine. After careful personal study and prayerful meditation, I exercise the right to refuse the administration of such vaccines into my body. I cannot be forced or coerced into receiving it and my rights cannot be violated for not being injected by it.

Another reason why I cannot be forced to take the Covid vaccine is my belief that God gave all people free will. It is one of the most important aspects of my faith. I deeply believe in freedom of choice. God gave it to Adam and Eve at the time of creation. I make all the decisions for myself and my family based on my faith and my freedom of choice. I cannot be mandated to go against my free will because that is going against my God's wish of free will for all human beings.

The bible says:

Genesis 1:26 " And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

Genesis 3:22 "And the Lord God said, "Now that the man has become like one of us, knowing good and bad, what if he should stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever!"

These excerpts explain that people were created in the image of God and are given the same intelligence as God. Therefore I am given free will to think for myself and make my own choices for myself and my family. In Genesis 3:22 it explains how I have the consciousness to decide what is good and what is evil. With this consciousness, I have the right to use my free will that was given to me by God. I am using my free will to reject the Covid vaccine.

I am exercising my rights under the First Amendment of the US Constitution and §C.R.S. 25-4-1704 (4) (b) to receive Religious Exemption from Vaccination.

Applicable law has been interpreted to mean that a religious belief is subject to protection even though an institutionalized religious group does not espouse such beliefs or the fact that the religious group to which the individual professes to belong may not advocate or require such belief. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended Nov. 1, 1980; Part 1605.1-Guidelines on

Discrimination Because of Religion. The reported use of the ingredient SM-102 which is prohibited for use to humans and animals as well as other ingredients that are foreign to the All-wise composition of the human body by the Almighty Creator further validate my spiritual belief that I decide not to use the injection and to protect my body from different viruses following safe methods that have been proven entirely effective for adults in my age group and do not violate my religious convictions.

For all the reasons mentioned above, I chose to exercise my religious exemption clause and protect all my civil rights in accordance to my faith.

Sincerely,

Ageliki Heliotis

References

1. OUR INNOVATIVE VACCINE TECHNOLOGY PLATFORMS – ADVAC® AND PER.C6

<https://www.janssen.com/emea/emea/janssen-vaccine-technologies>

2. Update: COVID-19 Vaccine Candidates and Abortion-Derived Cell Lines

<https://lozierinstitute.org/update-covid-19-vaccine-candidates-and-abortion-derived-cell-lines/>

2. A prefusion SARS-CoV-2 spike RNA vaccine is highly immunogenic and prevents lung infection in non-human primates

<https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.09.08.280818v1.full>

3. SARS-CoV-2 mRNA vaccine design enabled by prototype pathogen preparednes

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-020-2622-0>